

**OPINION 2243 (Case 3439)*****Xantholinus gracilis* Sperk, 1835 (currently *Scopaeus gracilis*; Insecta, Coleoptera): usage conserved by the designation of a neotype**

**Abstract.** The Commission has conserved usage of the specific name of the staphylinid beetle *Xantholinus gracilis* Sperk, 1835 (currently *Scopaeus gracilis*) by designation of a neotype.

**Keywords.** Nomenclature; taxonomy; *Scopaeus*; *Scopaeus gracilis*; staphylinid beetle; Palaearctic.

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**Ruling**

- (1) Under the plenary power it is hereby ruled that all previous type fixations for *Xantholinus gracilis* are set aside and the male specimen mounted on a card with the aedeagus, tergite and sternite VIII, segment IX, and tergite X dissected and mounted on the same card, with beneath the card two labels as follows: Label 1: 'Greece, Central Macedonia/Sithonia: Sarti/10m/N 40°05'51" E 023°58'49"/06.07.2006, leg. J. Frisch'; Label 2: '*Scopaeus* Erichson 1839/*gracilis*/(Sperk 1835)/det. J. Frisch', deposited in the Natural History Museum of the Humboldt-University, Berlin, Germany, is designated as a neotype.
- (2) The name *gracilis* Sperk, 1835, as published in the binomen *Xantholinus gracilis* and as defined by the neotype designated in (1) above, is hereby placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology, with the endorsement that the neotype designated by the Commission is to be retained as the name-bearing type should the original specimen be found.

**History of Case 3439**

An application to conserve the usage of the specific name of the staphylinid beetle *Xantholinus gracilis* Sperk, 1835 (currently *Scopaeus gracilis*) by designation of a neotype was received from Johannes Frisch (*Museum für Naturkunde der Humboldt-Universität, Berlin, Germany*) and Lee H. Herman (*American Museum of Natural History, New York, NY, U.S.A.*) on 6 September 2007. After correspondence the case was published in BZN 65: 106–109 (June 2008). The title, abstract and keywords of the case were published on the Commission's website. No comments were received on this case.

**Decision of the Commission**

On 1 June 2009 the members of the Commission were invited to vote on the proposals published in BZN 65: 107–108. At the close of the voting period on 1 September 2009 the votes were as follows:

Affirmative – 19: Alonso-Zarazaga, Ballerio, Bouchet, Brothers, Fautin, Halliday, Harvey, Krell, Kullander, Lamas, Lim, Minelli, Papp, Patterson, Rosenberg, van Tol, Winston, Yanega and Zhang.



Negative – 7: Bogutskaya, Grygier, Kojima, Kottelat, Ng, Pape and Štys. Zhou abstained. Pyle was on leave of absence.

Kojima, voting AGAINST, said that he thought this application would make the situation more complicated. He felt that the authors should have firstly clearly stated whether *Xantholinus gracilis* is assigned to *Scopaeus*. The authors' statement 'these characters [in the original description of *Xantholinus gracilis*] do not exist in *Scopaeus*' implied that they do not consider *Xantholinus gracilis* to be assigned to *Scopaeus*. If *Xantholinus gracilis* is not assigned to *Scopaeus* and if *Scopaeus erichsonii* is a synonym of *Scopaeus gracilis* as currently understood, *Scopaeus erichsonii* would be used as the valid name for the species currently recognised under the name *Scopaeus gracilis*.

Kottelat, voting AGAINST, said that the application did not mention how using the name for a species with the originally described characters would affect stability. He asked who would be affected besides taxonomists? The occasional change of a name to accommodate new taxonomic observations is routine and should not disturb taxonomists.

Ng, voting AGAINST, said he did not feel the argument for any change causing instability had been sufficiently made, nor did he sense the need to place the original name on the list of rejected names. He said there has been some past taxonomic confusion, but now a new understanding that requires the recognition of two taxa. He did not think it was a problem that the better known taxon needs to have its name changed.

Štys, voting AGAINST, said he could not support the suggested fixation of a neotype. He explained that this was a case with a change in the concept of a species for which the holotype was lost but which was apparently morphologically and ecologically different. He felt the proposal made a concomitant drastic change in the type locality that would be unwarranted in the long-term. He felt that the short-term advantages in maintenance of an obviously incorrect name should be regarded subservient to the stability of nomenclature based on priority.

### Original references

The following is the original reference to the name placed on an Official List by the ruling given in the present Opinion:

*gracilis*, *Xantholinus*, Sperk, 1835, *Bulletin de la Société Impériale des Naturalistes de Moscou*, 8: 152.